

O 280718Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5292
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
INFO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USEU BRUSSELS
USMISSION UN ROME
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
NSC WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS MANILA 002046

SIPDIS
AIDAC

BANGKOK FOR USAID/OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR A. DWYER
USAID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA R. THAYER
KATHMANDU FOR W. BERGER AND S. MCINTYRE, USAID/W FOR ANE/AA
AND DCHA/FFP, STATE FOR EAP, GENEVA FOR N. KYLOH, USUN FOR
OFDA REPRESENTATIVE, BRUSSELS FOR P. BROWN, ROME FOR
USAID/OHA H. SPANOS, SECDEF FOR SOLIC, JOINT STAFF
WASHINGTON DC FOR J3/J4/J5, PACOM FOR J3/J4/J5, NSC FOR P.
MARCHAM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAID SOCI PREL KPAQ SENV EAGR RP

SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF DISASTER: TROPICAL STORM ONDOY
CAUSES DEATHS AND HEAVY DAMAGE IN THE PHILIPPINES

¶1. THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARA 4.

¶2. AS A RESULT OF THE TROPICAL STORM ONDOY DISASTER WHICH STRUCK THE PHILIPPINES ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2009, THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES HAS DETERMINED THAT THE DISASTER IS OF SUFFICIENT MAGNITUDE THAT IT IS BEYOND THE CAPACITY OF THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY, THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT DESIRES AND WILL ACCEPT U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE, AND IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE USG TO RESPOND. THE AMBASSADOR IS THEREFORE EXERCISING THE DISASTER ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY. POST REQUESTS A FUND CITE OF A TOTAL OF USD 100,000 TO PROVIDE DISASTER RELIEF VIA THE PHILIPPINES NATIONAL RED CROSS (PNRC) TO FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE STORM.

¶3. TROPICAL STORM ONDOY STRUCK THE PHILIPPINES ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2009, BRINGING SUSTAINED HEAVY RAINS ACROSS ALL OF THE REGIONS OF LUZON, ESPECIALLY THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (METRO MANILA). ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL DISASTER COORDINATING COUNCIL (NDCC), AS OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2009, REPORTING DATA FOR METRO MANILA AND SIX PROVINCES IS ESTIMATED AT 294,555 PERSONS AFFECTED, 83 PERSONS REPORTED DEAD, AND OVER 47,000 PERSONS IN 101 EVACUATION CENTERS. HIGH FLOOD WATER LEVELS, IN SOME CASES MORE THAN ONE METER, RESULTED IN HEAVY DAMAGE TO THOUSANDS OF HOMES, THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE STRANDED, AND TRAFFIC AT A NEAR STANDSTILL ON MOST MAJOR THOROUGHFARES. ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2009 THE SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND NDCC CHAIRMAN DECLARED A STATE OF NATIONAL CALAMITY IN THE METRO MANILA AREA AND 27 PROVINCES OF LUZON. SEARCH AND RESCUE EFFORTS CONTINUE ACROSS LUZON.

¶4. POST REQUESTS THAT USAID'S OFFICE OF US FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA) RELEASE USD 50,000 FOR IMMEDIATE RELIEF EFFORTS UNDER THE AMBASSADOR'S AUTHORITY AND AN ADDITIONAL USD 50,000, FOR A TOTAL OF USD 100,000. THESE FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR ASSISTANCE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY FLOODING RESULTING FROM TROPICAL STORM ONDOY. IN COORDINATION WITH PNRC, THE ASSISTANCE WILL FUND THE PURCHASE OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD COMMODITIES (SUCH AS BLANKETS, PLASTIC MATS, AND WATER CONTAINERS) AND CLEANUP EFFORTS WITH A FOCUS ON METRO MANILA.

¶5. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION AS THE RAINS CONTINUE, COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH OFDA?S REGIONAL OFFICE IN BANGKOK AND PROVIDE UPDATES AS THE IMPACT OF THE STORM BECOMES CLEARER.

BT KENNEY